

THE DARKSIDE OF STEREOTYPES: THE EFFECTS OF CRIME IN THE MEDIA  
ON RACIAL IDENTITY AND EMOTIONS

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated how the image of Black criminality in the media affects the racial identity and emotions of Blacks. It also examined how the image of White criminality affects the racial identity and emotions of Whites as a point of comparison. These effects were studied through the lens of self-categorization theory and inter-group emotions theory. SCT posits that a person's biases are a result of how relevant their social identity is to their self-concept. IET posits that the emotions a person feels are derived from the social group they belong to.

This study analyzed 369 responses from participants who were presented with Twitter news pages that presented all Black crime stories, all White crime stories, or negative (no race) stories. Findings showed that both Blacks and Whites decreased self-categorization with their race after viewing same-race criminality news stories. It also found that emotions were affected by content of the newsfeed. Lastly, the study found significant differences in self-categorization based on level of identification.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The idea of an individual possessing a social identity has been studied for the past 40 years. Social identity is a concept that is so seamlessly engrained into everyday life that it may be taken for granted. Identity can lie in one's gender, age cohort, race, or religion. It is classified as social because it is shared with individuals that possess the main characteristics of the common identity. Research shows that when an individual thinks of him or herself in terms of their social group (e.g., as a woman or as Hispanic) that individual is more likely to hold the thoughts, values, and behaviors of that social group. This phenomenon is called self-categorization (Reid, Giles, Hardwood, 2005).

When individuals categorize themselves as part of a certain social group they strive to maintain a positive self-concept. According to Horsney (2008) biases that result from being part of a social group are part of an ongoing process to maintain and protect a positive self-concept. Striving to maintain a positive social identity is found in many forms. When an individual's social identity is made salient that individual is more likely to favor their in-group over an out-group (e.g. Billig & Tajfel, 1973). Individuals are also more likely to have positive evaluations of their in-group (Mlicki & Ellemers, 1996).

If an individual endeavor to maintain a "positive self", this leads one to question what happens when negative aspects of an individual's social identity are made salient: How does one cope? This study explores just that and focuses on a specific social group: Blacks. The image of the Black, typically male, criminal has serious practical consequences. Dembo (1988) finds that Black males who endorse negative stereotypes about their in-group have a greater propensity

toward juvenile delinquency. More ominously, several gaming/simulation studies find that Whites are more likely to “shoot” an unarmed Black male than an unarmed white male (Payne, 2001; Correll et al., 2002; Plant & Peruche, 2005). Recently, real-world tragedies have occurred that exemplify the results of these studies. On Feb. 26, 2012, unarmed Black teen Trayvon Martin was shot and killed by neighborhood watch volunteer George Zimmerman in Sanford, Florida. Zimmerman claimed self-defense and was found not guilty of manslaughter. On Aug. 9, 2014, another unarmed Black teen, Michael Brown, was shot and killed by a White police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. Both shootings prompted protests across the nation that brought attention to the use of excessive force by police officers and the value of “Black Lives”. Interestingly, these protests also sparked discussion about the image of Black men as aggressive and dangerous. Many believe that racial profiling may have contributed to the hasty and fatal responses. Therefore, it is clear that the image of Black criminality in the media has real-world effects; this study, in contrast, explores how Black criminality affects the identity and emotions of Blacks.

Self-categorization theory posits a person’s biases are a result of how salient a person’s social identity is to their self-concept. Inter-group emotions theory, an extension of self-categorization theory, posits the emotions a person feels are derived from the social group they belong to. These theories emphasize that group members align themselves with a *positive* social identity and *positive* emotions towards their in-group. Therefore, the goal of this study is to explore *negative* stereotype priming and its effect on the social identity and emotions of Blacks. It will also examine negative, criminal representations of Whites as a point of comparison.

Much of the literature on individuals’ responses to stereotypes of their own group is primarily theoretical. Most empirical studies on the topic view the Black criminal stereotype

through the lens of Whites making judgments about Blacks. Currently, little empirical research studies the effect negative stereotypes have on an individuals' own in-group. Mastro (2008) states that, "Although it has been theorized that consuming negative images of one's in-group could have a negative influence on self-concept and self-esteem, few empirical studies have explored this relationship" (p. 336). This study plans to fill this gap in the literature.

Racial self-categorization has a profound impact specifically on the lives of Blacks. For example, Shelton and Sellers (2000) finds that Blacks that highly self-categorize with their racial group are more likely to perceive racial discrimination in an ambiguous act than low self-categorizers. Several studies find that that perceived racial discrimination can lead to adverse mental health consequences for Blacks. For example, in a 13-year panel study of Blacks, Jackson et al. (1996) finds that participant reports of racial discrimination were associated with higher levels of psychological distress.

Additionally, racial self-categorization has been linked to adverse effects on intellectual ability. Steele and Aronson (1995) finds that Black participants who indicate their race for a demographic question prior to taking a verbal test, solve less problems than Black participants not asked to indicate their race. Researchers explain that even the slightest saliency of being Black can induce thoughts of the stereotype of Blacks being intellectually inferior. The results of these studies among several others make it imperative to study the phenomenon of racial self-categorization and specifically how it is shaped by negative media images. The following chapters will outline the details of media priming, self-categorization theory, and inter-group emotions theory. They also explain the methodology used to study these concepts, the results of the study and a discussion of the implications of these findings.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Media Priming**

Media priming is the theoretical framework behind much of the research that explains the effects that stereotypes in the media have on audiences. Media priming is described as a short-term effect by which information is activated by recent media consumption and influences subsequent judgments and behaviors (Roskos-Ewoldsen, Roskos-Ewoldsen, Carpentier, 2008; Dixon & Azocar, 2007). Major areas of study for media priming have been violence, politics, and stereotypes (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2008). The process behind priming is grounded in cognitive psychology.

Cognitive psychology research uses the idea of schemas to conceptualize priming effects. A schema can be defined as, “a cognitive structure that represents knowledge about a concept or type of stimulus, including its attributes and the relations among those attributes” (Fiske & Taylor, 1991, p.98). Therefore, people organize their perceptions of the environment into clusters of information. The associated concepts that are present within a schema relate to the associated nodes in the network priming model. When a schema is activated, related attributes/concepts are activated as well (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2008). The priming effect occurs when the activation of certain schema affects judgment, processing and comprehension of subsequent information. Wyer and Srull (1989) posit frequently activated schemas can become chronically accessible (i.e., highly available from memory) for a period of time.

Priming strength is contingent upon two functions: Recency and intensity. Recency refers to the time lag between a prime and a target. The smaller the time gap between the primed

concept and the evaluation of subsequent information, the stronger the priming effect (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2008). Intensity of a prime relates to how long and how often a prime is activated. Primes presented with higher intensity results in stronger priming effects as compared to those presented with low intensity (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2008). In general, priming effects tend to last anywhere from 15-20 minutes to possibly an hour (Srull & Wyer, 1979). Furthermore, studies in political priming have found longer priming effects. Effects for this type of priming last for two months after media coverage. Price and Tewksbury (1997) explains that greater media coverage of a topic makes the topic chronically accessible.

### *Priming Stereotypes*

Stereotypes are one of the newest concepts to which media priming is applied. Research currently looks at priming gender stereotypes (Hansen & Krygowski, 1994; Yao, Mahood & Linz, 2010) and racial stereotypes (Abraham & Appiah, 2006; Oliver and Fonash, 2002). Researchers find that priming stereotypes profoundly affect judgments and evaluations of the stereotyped group in question. An example of the priming effect on gender stereotypes is made evident in research conducted on the “rape myth,” the sentiment that women “ask for rape” and that rape is a result of uncontrollable male desires (Burt, 1980). Hansen and Krygowski (1994) find exposure to rock music that portrays stereotyped images of men and women causes participants to have more stereotyped evaluations of video interactions between men and women. Participants exposed to gender stereotyped rock videos found women to be less dominant as compared to those who did not watch the video, and demonstrated a stronger endorsement of the rape myth. Yao, Mahood & Linz (2010) found gender stereotype priming in their study utilizing a

sexually explicit video game. Researchers find that playing a video game with the theme of female “objectification” for just 25 minutes primes thoughts of sex and thoughts of women as sexual objects. Further, it posits that the exposure to sexually explicit game play leads to an increase in self-reported tendencies to behave inappropriately towards women in social situations (Yao, Mahood & Linz, 2010).

Abraham & Appiah (2006) found that visual imagery can have a significant impact on priming effects. This study analyzed the effects of imagery on the priming of racial stereotypes. Participants were shown online news stories on two public policy issues. The first news story pertained to the three strikes law which states that felons found guilty of a serious crime for a third time may be sentenced to a minimum 25 year to life sentence. The second story was about school vouchers, which allows families to select the public or private schools of their choice for their child and have full or partial tuition paid. This story was used to elicit ideas of how some education programs give funding to individual families instead of school districts. Each news story was presented with no images, two photographs of Blacks, or two photographs of Whites. After viewing the different versions of the news story, participants were then asked to assess the extent to which the racial/ethnic group was affected by the policy issue. The study finds that racial imagery had a strong effect on the associations made about each ethnic group and the social problem such that imagery of Blacks primed racial stereotypes that led to stronger associations with Blacks and the social problem.

Other research also shows that exposure to racial stereotype primes also affect judgments and evaluations. Oliver and Fonash (2002) looked at the associations made between races and violent vs. non-violent crimes. Participants read two violent and two non-violent crime stories

that were accompanied by photographs of a Black or white suspect. After reading the stories and viewing the accompanied image, participants were given ten photos and asked to indicate which photo they believed matched the individual pictured in the crime story. Four photographs were the same used in the crime stories, and the remaining six photographs consisted of three Black and three white males who were not featured in the news stories. Researchers find that misidentification of Blacks with violent crimes was higher than for Whites and to a lesser extent misidentification of Whites with non-violent crimes was higher than for Blacks. This study suggests that imagery can also have a strong effect on priming racial stereotypes.

### *Priming Black Criminality*

Generally, Blacks tend to be overrepresented in TV news programs as criminals (Dixon and Linz, 2000; Entman, 1992; Dixon & Azocar, 2007). This tendency promulgates the linkage between Blacks and criminality. Bjornstor, Kaufman, Peterson and Slater (2010) state, “views of the nature of the crime problem and who, or what, is responsible for said problem in a locale may be shaped by the extent to which specific groups are over- or underrepresented as perpetrators or victims in crime news relative to other groups” (p.269). Dixon & Linz (2000) studied the representation of Blacks on TV news programs and finds that Blacks were twice as likely as Whites to be portrayed as perpetrators of crime and six times more likely to be portrayed as perpetrators of crime than as police officers. Lastly, the study finds that Blacks are overrepresented as criminals; 37 percent of Blacks are depicted as perpetrators, despite only 21 percent of Blacks constitute all people arrested according to crime reports. Therefore, the overrepresentation of Blacks as criminals may cause an over-attribution of Blacks as the major

culprits of crime in its totality (Dixon and Azocar, 2007). Studies have shown that images of Black criminality have a profound impact on audience judgments.

A considerable body of empirical research surrounding priming and racial stereotypes looks at how stereotypes of marginalized groups affect the judgments of majority group members. These studies find that even a short exposure to a racial/ethnic stereotypes in the media influences real-world evaluations of minorities, often in negative ways (Dixon, 2007; Dixon & Azocar, 2007; Mastro & Kopacz, 2006; Givens & Monahan, 2005). A frequent prime used for studying Black stereotypes is the image of Black criminality. For example, Dixon (2006) finds that study participants exhibit stronger support for the death penalty after viewing a newscast featuring Black suspects as compared to viewing a newscast where the race was unspecified. Dixon and Maddox (2005) surprisingly report that participants experienced a higher level of discomfort when exposed to Black perpetrators of a darker-skinned complexion versus a perpetrator of a lighter skin complexion.

Dixon & Azocar (2007) find that repeated exposure to images of Blacks as criminals cause heavy viewers to create a mental model of Black criminality such that a story without racial identifiers will nonetheless elicit unfavorable thoughts about Blacks. Researchers find that when exposing heavy news viewers to White suspects, Black suspects, unidentified suspects or non-crime stories, affect how they evaluate subsequent social topics. Participants exposed to Black and unidentified suspects were less likely to believe Blacks' face limitations to success and were more likely to believe a racially unidentified suspect was culpable of their crime than when exposed to a news story with a white suspect.



### *Priming Effects on Those Stereotyped*

The lens through which stereotype priming research is conducted creates a gap in the research. Very few studies look at how the priming of negative stereotypes affect the group being stereotyped. It has been hypothesized that this form of priming would have a negative impact on an individual's self-esteem and self-concept (e.g. Mastro, 2008). However, results have been inconclusive. Fryberg (2003) conducted five studies to gauge the effects of representations of Native Americans on self-esteem and in-group efficacy. In study one, American Indian high school students were primed with a predominant representation of their group (e.g., Pocahontas, Chief Wahoo etc.). Participants then completed self-esteem or collective self-efficacy measures. In this study, American Indian students primed with social representations report an increase in positive associations but a decrease in self-esteem and collective self-efficacy when compared to American Indian students in the control (no social representation) group. Researchers posit that there is a decrease in self-esteem and collective self-efficacy for these students because it's a reminder of the limited ways others see them, which in turn limits the way they see themselves.

Rivadeneyra, Ward and Gordon (2007) find that the self-esteem of adolescent Latinos are negatively impacted by exposure to different media genres. Researchers conducted two studies. Study one surveyed 40 Latino high school students and found that more frequent and more active TV viewing was associated with lower social and appearance self-esteem. Study two surveyed college students and found more consistent negative correlations in active TV watching and self-esteem among women and among participants with a stronger Latino ethnic identity. Other studies have found opposing results. In a study where 117 Spanish-surnamed elementary

school students were surveyed to examine the relationship between television exposure and self-concept, researchers found no relationship between television exposure and self-concept. They also did not find a significant correlation between Spanish-speaking television watching and self-concept (Subervi-Velez & Necochea, 1990). As demonstrated, the studies that have tackled this subject have focused heavily on self-esteem. This study will break new ground by applying negative media stereotypes to social identity and group emotions.

### *Social Identity and Priming*

The idea of a social identity was first introduced by Tajfel (1972) and is defined simply as an “individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups” (p. 292). According to social identity theory, individuals are likely to find group membership in social categories such as gender, age cohort, religious affiliation and the like. Social identity, i.e. group membership, is accompanied by group norms. Norms are shared patterns of thoughts, feeling, and behavior (Hogg & Tindale, 2005). These norms essentially guide group members’ behaviors and attitudes. Social identity is studied in the context of prejudice, discrimination, and conditions that promote different types of intergroup behavior such as conflict and cooperation (Hogg & Terry, 2000).

Many studies on media stereotypes use priming to explain how exposure to stereotypes affect an individual’s subsequent judgments (Busselle & Crandall, 2002; Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Gilens, 1999). Mastro and Kapaz (2006) however, take on a new perspective by introducing how awareness of one’s self-identity can explain racial priming effects. Researchers introduce the concept of prototypicality, based on the assumption that the activation of group membership also triggers the creation of group prototypes (i.e., sets of characteristics considered emblematic of a

group) (Mastro & Kapaz, 2006). Researchers find that prototypes serve as benchmarks for evaluations. The more similar an in-group or an out-group target is to the relevant characteristic of the perceiver's in-group, the more favorable a person will evaluate a target. Opposite results would be expected if the in-group or out-group member is less similar to the perceiver (Hogg & Hains, 1996).

Mastro & Kopaz (2006) applies the concept of prototypicality to evaluations of Hispanics and Blacks and thoughts that the government should aid in supporting minorities. Researchers measure prototypicality by having participants think of the 'typical' depiction of African Americans, Latinos and Whites on TV or in the movies. Participants were then asked to check a space between adjectives to indicate how they would describe the respective ethnic group on each attribute. A score of 7 indicated the most favorable evaluation and a score of 1 indicated the least favorable evaluation. In order to calculate prototypicality, each attribute score for African Americans and Hispanics were subtracted from the corresponding score for Whites. Higher scores indicated a greater discrepancy between the groups, favoring Whites (Mastro & Kapaz, 2006). Researchers find that as prototypicality increases so does the attribution of negative stereotypes to each group. An increase in prototypicality also results in a decrease in sentiments that the government should aid in supporting minorities. This study's analysis of prototypicality introduces an important variable in predicating media priming effects.

Another study investigates the effects of celebrity prototypicality on white consumers' liking of African Americans. Researchers found that the greater the similarity a media personality is to the (White) in-group prototype, the greater the social attraction (Mastro, Tamborini, & Hullett, 2005). The aforementioned studies introduce an important factor to the

current study: The subconscious awareness that an individual belongs to a particular social group and that that awareness effects behavior. This phenomenon can be more thoroughly explained through self-categorization theory.

### Self-Categorization Theory

Self-categorization theory posits that group biases are a result of the importance of one's group identity to one's self-concept (Reid, Giles and Hardwood, 2005). This theory was derived from Tajfel's and Turner's social identity theory. It focuses on the cognitive processes that cause individuals to identify with groups and consider themselves and others in group terms. This theory also examines group behavior (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Self-categorization theory operates under the assumption that there are three levels of self-categorization that are important to the self-concept: The superordinate category of the self as human being (or human identity), the intermediate level of the self as a member of a social in-group as defined by other groups of humans (social identity), and the subordinate level of personal self-categorizations based on interpersonal comparisons (personal identity).

When one identity is made salient, the other identities become less central to the self-concept (Turner et al., 1987). In a longitudinal study by Hitlin, Brown, and Elder (2006) researchers look at the self-categorization of multiracial individuals across time. A representative sample of adolescents ages 14-18 were surveyed once and again five years later. Results show that over this time, more multiracial adolescents either add a racial category (diversify) or subtract one (consolidate) than maintain consistent in their multiracial self-categorization. This

study portrays the fluidity of self-categorization. It emphasizes how the saliency of group membership can change over time.

The saliency of one's social group depends on two concepts: fit (comparative and normative) and accessibility (Hoggs & Reid, 2006). Comparative fit can be described as a smaller average amount of difference between an in-group as compared to an out-group. If the differences between attributes of an in-group are small, the group will more likely be considered an entity which increases the likelihood of saliency (Haslam & Turner, 1992). Normative fit relates to the actual content of the attributes. Group attributes must be consistent with normative beliefs about the social meaning of the group. If the content of group attributes match what is considered the social meaning of the group, saliency is also increased (Hoggs & Reid, 2006). For example, Turner, Oakes, Haslam, and McGarty (1994) state that in order "to categorize a group of people as Catholic as opposed to Protestants they must not only differ (in attitudes, actions etc.) from Protestants more than from one another (comparative fit) but must also do so in the right direction on specific content dimensions of comparison" (p.455). Along with fit is the concept of accessibility. Group categorization is more or less likely to be salient if key attributes are more or less accessible in the moment. Categories can be briefly accessible if they are primed in the situation, or they may be chronically accessible if they are frequently activated (Horsney, 2008).

#### *Depersonalization and Group Prototypicality*

Depersonalization is also an important aspect of self-categorization theory because it produces conformity to shared in-group prototypes and thus produces in-group normative

behavior (Hogg & Reid, 2006). This process causes people to think and behave less as an individual and more in line with agreed upon group norms. Self-categorization depersonalizes an individual's perception of him or herself as a unique individual and instead causes us to think of ourselves as embodiments of our group.

Group prototypes contribute to the depersonalization process. Horsney (2008), states "People cognitively represent their social groups in terms of prototypes. When a category becomes salient, people come to see themselves and other category members less as individuals and more as interchangeable exemplars of the group prototype" (p.208). Group prototypes guide how people feel, think, and behave. The effects of group prototypes, however, are most influenced by the degree to which a member feels their attributes are consistent with the group prototype (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Furthermore, the use of in-group prototypes in the depersonalization process produces normative behavior, stereotyping, ethnocentrism, positive in-group attitudes and cohesion (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Self-categorization also causes our thoughts, perceptions, behavior, and feelings to conform to our prototype of the in-group.

### Inter-Group Emotions Theory

Inter-group emotions theory is an extension of self-categorization theory. According to Mackie, Smith, and Ray (2008) the emotions one feels can derive from the social group that one belongs to. This theory argues that people can experience different emotions depending on whether they see themselves as unique individuals (personal identity) or whether they see themselves through processes of self-categorization as members of a group (social identity). This suggests that individuals experience different emotions when thinking about themselves as

individuals or members of one group versus another group (Mackie, Smith, & Ray, 2008). The level of group identification mediates emotions experienced such that those who strongly identify with a group experience and express group emotions to a greater extent than those who weakly identify (Smith, Seger, & Mackie, 2007).

Once membership in a certain group is made salient, individuals begin to think of themselves as a prototypical members of that respective group. Consequently, they see themselves as having the characteristics associated with group membership and hold the attitudes, beliefs, and feelings associated with that group. Smith, Seger, and Mackie (2007) studies the interaction between self-categorization and subsequent emotions. Participants were asked to report the emotions they experienced when thinking about themselves as unique individuals, as well as the emotions experienced as members of university and as a member of a certain political party. They find that a person's individual-level emotions are distinct from emotions derived from thinking of themselves as members of a group. They also find that effects were contingent on level of group identification.

Cottrell and Neuberg (2005) studied how the salience of an individual's group membership affects the differing emotions an individual has in response to various out-groups. This study takes on a socio-functional approach to explain that groups believed to pose distinct threats to in-group resources or way of life arouse distinct emotional reactions. Participants were all of European American decent and were asked to indicate their emotions towards a set of nine groups: activist feminists, African Americans, Asian Americans, European Americans, fundamentalist Christians, gay men, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, and non-fundamentalist Christians. Based on the demographics of the participants, these groups were

chosen because they were believed to pose a threat to the European American citizen in some way. Examples of this are gay men posing a threat to health via perceived association with HIV/AIDS and Asian Americans posing an economic threat to European Americans. Each group was rated on the emotions of anger, disgust, fear, pity, envy, and guilt. Participants also rated threat on several dimensions: obstacles contamination, physical, safety threat, non-reciprocity by inability, economic, property, freedoms, reciprocity (choice), social coordination, health, values and trust. The study finds that different groups evoke different emotional responses. The study also found that groups that elicited similar threat profiles also elicited similar emotion profiles. For example the threat to physical safety correlates with fear. African-Americans and Mexican-Americans scored highest among all other groups on the threat to physical safety and the emotional response of fear. This helps to illustrate how an individual's awareness of their group identity can have an effect on their emotional responses.

Crisp, Heuston, Farr, and Turner (2007) studied the emotions elicited when one's group membership as a soccer fan is made salient. Researchers find that the emotions felt when a fan experienced a loss was contingent upon their degree of identification with the team. The soccer fans were tested in three sessions following matches resulting in two losses and one win. Researchers found that following loss matches, lower group identifiers felt sad but not angry, conversely higher identifiers felt angry but not sad. These studies demonstrate the key concepts of intergroup emotions theory: The emotions that one experiences as a result of group membership differs based on the group identity that is made salient and how central the group identity is to one's self concept.



## Stereotype Threat

Stereotype threat is the last component of the study because it provides empirical evidence for the notion that certain stereotypes have a negative impact on individuals. According to Steele and Aronson (1995), when an individual is confronted with a widely held negative stereotype about their social group, that individual will experience a psychological threat resulting in anxiety, a decrease in performance and lowered self-esteem etc. Researchers also posit that confrontation with a negative social identity stereotype could cause the individual to avoid exposure to the stereotype or “dis-identify” with the identity (Steele & Aronson, 1995). This threat will arise if the individuals feel as though they are at risk of conforming to that negative stereotype. For example Spencer, Steele, and Quinn (1999) find that when women were presented with a difficult math test, the negative stereotype of women being underperformers in math was elicited. As a result, math test performance decreases.

Similarly, Steele and Aronson (1995) gave a test to both White and Black participants in two conditions. In order to elicit the negative stereotype of Blacks as unintelligent, researchers labeled the test as a diagnosis of verbal ability in one condition and non-diagnostic in the other. Upon completing this test, it was found that Blacks in the diagnosis of verbal ability condition performed an entire standard deviation lower than Whites. Conversely, Blacks matched the performance of Whites in the non-diagnostic condition. Because this research provides empirical support that negative stereotypes adversely affect stereotyped individuals, it is a crucial component of the current study. As posited in Steele and Brown (1999), being threatened by a stereotype could result in dis-identification with the identity. This study will test that assumption.

### Positive Social Identity

Group prototypes are an important concept in the theoretical traditions of social identity and self-categorization theories. A prototype serves as a model of the “typical group member”. Another way of referring to this prototype is simply a stereotype. Group stereotypes can be learned in various ways. One way in which group stereotypes are communicated is through the media. Mastro (2008) states, “media use has been determined to play a meaningful role in the development of race/ethnicity cognitions and intergroup behaviors” (p.325). Therefore the media both creates and communicates group identity consistently in the form of easily accessible stereotypes.

As stated earlier, Blacks are disproportionately presented as criminals in the media (Dixon, 2000). This overrepresentation creates a “Black criminal stereotype” (Gilliam & Iyengar, 1998; Dixon & Azocar (2007). According to Dixon and Azocar (2007) the Black criminal stereotype might be chronically accessible due to frequent past activation via social interaction and/or media exposure. Therefore, as the media priming process suggests, this stereotype may be activated so frequently and consistently that it is chronically accessible. Previous studies also suggest that the priming of this specific stereotype creates a mental model that activates judgments of Blacks as a whole (See. Dixon & Azocar, 2007; Dixon & Maddox, 2005; Dixon, 2006; Mastro & Kapaz, 2006).

It is hypothesized that negative representations of Blacks in the media can affect Blacks’ self-perception. Specifically, the constant portrayal of stereotyped images of Blacks may affect a viewer’s belief that these stereotypes characterize Blacks in the real world (Ward, 2004). Some empirical studies have looked at the effects of general exposure of primetime television on the

self-esteem of Blacks. These studies, however, have yielded mixed results. Research suggests that greater exposure to mainstream entertainment programming is associated with lower self-esteem among various minorities (Rivadeneira, Ward, Gordon 2007; Ward, 2004). On the other hand, Allen (1998) found that greater exposure to Black-oriented TV was associated with a stronger endorsement of positive stereotypical beliefs about Blacks. Exposure to this genre of television, however, also created a weaker sense of Black autonomy and African self-consciousness (Allen, 1998). Stroman (1986) examined associations between weekly hours of television viewing and the self-concepts of 102 Black third through sixth graders as measured with the Piers- Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale. Researchers found that greater TV viewing was associated with a more positive self-concept among girls, but no significant effects occurred for boys.

Ward (2004) attributes several reasons to these mix of positive and negative results of media exposure on self-esteem and self-concept. The first of which is the belief that African Americans may not be as susceptible to the negative influences of media portrayals. Researchers have observed that members of stigmatized groups in general, employ strategies that protect their self-esteem from the prejudice and denigration of others (Crocker & Major, 1989). A second explanation centers on the role that first-hand experience plays. It is believed that television is the most influential when there is a lack of firsthand experience or alternative sources of information are lacking (Himmelweit, Oppenheim, & Vince, 1958). Ward argues that for Blacks viewing images of Blacks, this is not the case. Instead, Black viewers have copious first-hand experience of life as a Black American when consuming media (Ward, 2004). Lastly, Ward states that these previous explanations do not account for the mix of negative and positive

correlations found in earlier studies. Further, she states that associations between Black viewers' self-esteem and media use is not thoroughly explained by current theorizing.

Although some studies have found that television exposure has negative effects on Blacks, these studies simply examined exposure to programs on self-esteem. Using exposure to television as the sole independent variable does not account for the attributes, valence, and context of the Black characters presented. As mentioned earlier, the use of stereotypes develop and teach viewers about group behaviors and social identity. How then would priming Black criminality affect the sentiments and self-identity of Blacks viewers? The use of self-categorization theory and inter-group emotions theory goes a step further than simply hypothesizing that negative images of one's social group have negative outcomes. These theories attend to the complexity of being exposed to negative stereotypes of one's social group and may more accurately explain how individuals may cope with such images.

#### *Positive Group Self-Categorization*

One of the fundamental aspects of self-categorization theory is the need to maintain a positive self-concept. Biases in behaviors, attributions, and stereotypes are all considered part of an ongoing process to achieve, maintain, and protect a positive self-concept (Horsney, 2008). According to Tajfel and Turner (1979) "If we are to accept that people are motivated to have a positive self-concept, it flows naturally that people should be motivated to think of their groups positively. Striving for a positive social identity, group members are motivated to think and act in ways that achieve or maintain a positive distinctiveness between one's own group and relevant

out-groups.” (p.207) Therefore, individuals are motivated to act in ways that achieve a positive social and self-concept.

This motivation becomes more complex when an individual is presented with a negative representation of their social group. According to Horsney (2008), social identity theorists outlined how a low status group member can establish a positive social identity. Options for coping with a negative social identity include 1) Leaving the group either physically or psychologically or 2) Focusing only on dimensions that make the in-group look relatively good and devaluing dimensions that reflect poorly on the in-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Hogg & Abrams, 1988).

Conversely, how high-status group individuals respond to negative images of their in-group is also of particular interest to us in this study. According to Spears, Doosje, and Ellemers (1997), there is a slight trend for low status individuals to display higher in-group bias when encountered with a negative representation of one’s group. This could suggest that high-status groups will display lower group bias when encountered with a negative stereotype. In a study of high-status groups and social identity threat, researchers find that members of high status groups are less likely to perceive a threat, because based on their current position in society, there is no reason for concern (Scheepers, Ellemers, & Sintemaartensdijk, 2009). The White Racial Identity Model submits that Whites are unaware of their racial identity as opposed to other ethnic groups (Helms, 1984). In Katz and Ivey (1977) researchers state, “ask a White person what he or she is racially and you may get the answer “Italian”, “English”, “Catholic” or “Jewish”. White people do not see themselves as White” (p.486).

Conversely, Demo & Hughes (1990) suggests that “being Black” impacts several aspects of an individual’s life. Researchers state, “structurally, being Black in American society means occupying a racially defined status; associated with this status are roles in family, community, and society” (p.364). Therefore Whites (a high status group) may differ in self-categorization to Blacks (a low status group). That being said, this study will also explore how Whites are effected by a negative group representation. Studying Whites (a high status group) will act as an interesting point of comparison with Blacks (a low-status group). Given the aforementioned research:

RQ1. How will viewing same-race criminality primes affect self-categorization for those in the Black and White criminality prime conditions?

H1: The Black criminality condition and the White criminality condition will differ at Time 1 self-categorization.

### *Positive Inter-Group Emotions*

Inter-group emotions theory suggests that when group membership is made salient, individuals strive to maintain positive emotions. This is especially true when individuals highly identify with their group. Smith, Seger, and Mackie (2007) suggest that people who identify more strongly with a group should express group emotions to a greater extent than weak identifiers. They state that this is particularly true for positive group emotions such as happiness or pride. The situation is more unclear with negative emotions. It could be possible that there is a positive relationship between group membership and negative emotions such that strong group identifiers would stick with the group even if group membership gives rise to negative emotions

such as fear or guilt, whereas weaker identifiers will disassociate with the group. This conclusion, however, has somewhat mixed evidence based on previous studies. For one, Mackie, Silver, and Smith (2004) find that self-categorization with Americans as a group is positively associated with emotions of fear and anger about the possibility of a hypothetical terrorist attack on the United States. Similar studies have also found that stronger negative emotions are more likely found in high group identifiers than low group identifiers (Yzerbyt, Dumont, Wigboldus, and Gordijn, 2003; Gordijn, Yzerbyt, Wigboldus, & Dumont, 2006).

On the other hand, Doosje et al., (1998) suggests that strong group identifiers are motivated to reevaluate situations to avoid experiencing negative group emotions such as guilt. Dutch students were given a one-page summary of either a positive or negative bias of the history of Dutch colonization of Indonesia. Results demonstrate that when the participant's negative group past is made salient, high Dutch identifiers experience less negative emotions than did low group identifiers. Researchers suggest that the decrease in negative emotions is a defensive strategic behavior to prevent high identifiers from feeling negative group-based emotions. This study shows a negative correlation between self-categorization and negative group emotions.

According to Smith, Seger, and Mackie (2007), "the last possible outcome of the experience of negative emotions on group membership is that individuals might decrease self-categorization with a group that makes them feel guilty, discouraged, or irritated, also creating a negative correlation" (p.433). However, this possible outcome has not been directly tested, but may be suggested by the decrease in negative emotions expressed in several studies. Smith, Seger and Mackie (2007) similar to Doosje et al. (1998), find that negative group-level emotions

correlate negatively with self-categorization. Researchers admit that these results could be the result of re-assessing group emotions as the first coping mechanism suggests. They also explain that this could be caused by disassociating with one's group, as the last explanation suggests. Because research is inconclusive on the exact effects of emotion and social identity, the following research question and hypothesis are posed:

RQ2. How will viewing same-race criminality primes affect group-level emotional responses across conditions?

Research also suggests that the extent to which one identifies with a certain group dictates an individual's reaction to a negative stereotype.

H2: Degree of identification with being Black or White at Time 1 (i.e. reporting high or low self-categorization) will affect a) Time 2 self-categorization and b) intergroup emotion responses.

### The Current Study

Previous research recognizes that the media has a strong impact on shaping the perceptions of audiences. Representations of Blacks as criminals have influenced how Whites perceive Blacks in a number of negative ways (e.g. Abraham & Appiah, 2006; Oliver & Fonash, 2002). Research also finds that these presentations of Black criminality have cognitive and practical effects on Black's perceptions of their own racial group.

On a cognitive level, Blacks have demonstrated an implicit bias against unknown faces of their own race (Livingston, 2002). Further, Black men have performed worse in situations in



which their social identity acts as a stressor; Stereotype threat is an example of this. The reduction of working memory capacity is concluded to be the cause of stereotype threat effects (Schmader & Johns, 2003). The image of the Black, typically male, criminal also has practical, real-world consequences as stated earlier. The fatalities of Trayvon Martin, Micheal Brown, and many others have sparked discussion about Black criminality in the media and the use of the word “thug” to describe Black males.

Despite the results of these research studies and current events, not many studies have been conducted on how Blacks perceive Black criminality. While researchers have noted that the image of Black criminality may theoretically have adverse effects on Blacks, there is simply little empirical research that clearly demonstrates this (Mastro, 2008). One reason for the lack of studies that rely on Black participants is simply the demographic structure in higher education. As of 2010, Blacks accounted for a little over 10% of all postsecondary degrees granted (“Degrees Conferred by Sex and Race”, 2014). Students tend to be a main source for participants in scholarly research.

The current study is important and unique in that it takes on the task of studying how Blacks perceive Black criminality in the media instead of the often studied White perceptions of Black criminality. Also, this study compares how White criminality primes affect White identity. By doing this, how racial identity varies between groups and how groups may emotionally cope with negative images differently can be analyzed. For this study, Twitter will act as the media platform. Twitter is a resource people turn to for news and information. In Johnson and Yang’s (2009) uses and gratifications study, researchers find that users are primarily motivated to use Twitter for informational purposes. Informational motives included getting information (facts,

links, news, knowledge, and ideas), giving or receiving advice, learning interesting things, and sharing information with others. In a 2013 Pew research study, researchers find that one-in-ten U.S. adults (8%) get news through Twitter (Guskin & Mitchell, 2013). Twitter is therefore an emerging news source.

Using social media instead of a traditional media as a platform has become an emerging option for priming research. Buchanan (2015), which uses Facebook as the platform for the prime in the study. The study finds that the presence of violent advertisements on a mock Facebook page prompted high levels of aggression-related cognition. Therefore, the rationale for using Twitter as the media platform in this context is twofold. Twitter is emerging a go-to news source and social media as a platform for media research is also growing. Taking this into consideration, Twitter was chosen as the platform to present the Black and White criminality primes in this study.

Identity is important to study because it builds self-concept and guides behavior (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995). If research finds that the Black criminal stereotype has such strong effects in other aspects of life, it is imperative to study how this stereotype affects “the self” of such a large population of people. Also, because this study compares how negative racial images affects Whites, the idea of how racial identity varies between groups and how groups may emotionally cope with negative images differently can be analyzed. By tapping into how a negative image (stereotype threat), effects social identity (self-categorization) and coping (intergroup emotions), this study can help paint a clearer picture of what researchers have so long hypothesized.

This study consists of three conditions. Black and White participants were randomly assigned to either the Black Criminality Crime condition, White Criminality Crime condition or the control condition. All those in the Black Criminality Crime condition saw all Black crime primes. Those in the White Criminality Crime condition saw all White crime primes, and lastly, those in the control condition saw all negative news stories that did not display race at all. The stimuli used in this study were two Twitter newsfeeds per condition. These Twitter newsfeeds displayed the negative image of criminality at the hands of all Black or all White criminals. In order to see how self-categorization with one's social group is affected by this image of criminality each participant was asked self-categorization questions before and after viewing the prime. Criminality stigmatization questions were asked post exposure to the prime to make participants self-reflect on their linkage to the stigma/stereotype of their social group engaging in crime therefore inducing the phenomenon of stereotype threat. Lastly, Inter-group emotions questions were asked following exposure to the prime to analyze how emotions are affected by the image of criminality. The following chapter will outline the methods and measures used in this study in more detail.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

### Design

This study follows a mixed 2 participant race (Black/White) x 3 racial criminality prime (Black/White/Control) design. Participant race and racial criminality prime are between-subject factors such that White participants viewed White criminality primes and Black participants viewed Black criminality primes. Participants in the control condition, made up of randomly assigned Black and White participants, viewed tweets with no display or mention of race. Each participant viewed two newsfeeds. Each Twitter page in the criminality prime conditions, had a mug shot, crowd image, and arrest image tweet. Each page had two “filler tweets” for a total of five tweets. Filler tweets were posts that were about non-crime news. They were used in order to make the racial prime Twitter page mirror a news channel Twitter page which is likely to have a mixture of both crime and non-crime stories. The control condition contained two newsfeeds with five tweets each that were unrelated to race but did display negative non-crime stories.

### Participants

Undergraduate students enrolled at a large southern university received course credit for completing this online experiment. Participants were also recruited from Black student organizations under a quota sampling method to ensure that there were near equal amounts of participants across the participant race condition. An email was sent to presidents of multicultural organizations on campus offering a donation of \$3 per participant that completed the survey. The donation was given directly to the organization. Three multicultural organizations participated. Students were told this was a study looking at millennial use of

Twitter and that the survey was in need of diverse voices to contribute their thoughts. 161 students were recruited using this method. There were a total of 504 students that took the survey. The 135 of the students who did not select “Black/African American/African/Caribbean” or “White/European/Caucasian” were excluded from the analysis; therefore there were a total of 369 participants’ data analyzed for this study. The Black criminality condition had 116 participants and the White criminality condition had 110 participants. The control condition had 143 participants: 57 of whom were “Black/African American/African/Caribbean” and 86 of whom were “White/European/Caucasian” (See Appendix A).

## Measures

### *Stereotype Threat*

According to Steele and Aronson (1995), stereotype threat arises when an individual feels they are at risk of conforming to a negative stereotype. For this reason, allowing participants to think about conforming to the negative stereotype of criminality is essential to discovering how this stereotype affects self-categorization and intergroup emotions. Studies on stereotype threat often employ academic performance tests to threaten minorities and women with the negative stereotype of low intelligence as compared to Whites and men, respectively (Steele and Aronson, 1995; Spencer, Steele, Quinn, 1999).

Confrontation with the negative stereotype is a key component of stereotype threat research. Participants are said to experience the effects of stereotype threat when the negative stereotype is made salient (Aronson, Lustina, Good, Keough, Steele, & Brown, 1999). Another main component of the phenomenon is the acknowledgment that this stereotype is a widely held

belief in society and that an individual is at risk to conforming to that belief (Steele and Aronson, 1995; Aronson et al., 1999). Having participants confront the image of criminality is a challenge because no such “criminality measure” has been developed.

For this reason, the measure of stigmatization laid out in Harvey (2001) was used to elicit the stereotype threat phenomenon. In this study, stigma is defined as a deviation from the attributes considered acceptable by society. By being socially deviant, stigmatized individuals are said to have a “spoiled identity” in which their full participation in society is discredited (Harvey, 2001). Sample items from the Stigmatization Scale are as followed (Some items were altered to reflect the stigma of criminality): “I’m viewed negatively by mainstream society,” “I feel that society holds a negative attitude toward me,” “I feel as though society sees someone that looks like me as a potential criminal.” All items were measured with a five-point likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). In total there were nine stereotype threat questions. Cronbach’s Alpha for this instrument was .923. The criminality stigmatization scale instrument is available in Appendix B.

### *Self-Categorization*

Adapted measures of self-categorization used in Brown, Condor, Mathews, Wade & Williams (1986) and Sellers, Shelton, Rowley, Chavous (1997) were used to assess racial self-categorization with participant racial group. These items include: “I see myself as Black/White,” “I am pleased to be Black/White,” “I find strong ties with being Black/White,” and “I identify with other Blacks/Whites,” “In general, being Black/White is an important part of my self-image.” “I consider my being Black/White central to my life,” “I have a strong attachment to

other Black/White people,” “Overall, being Black/White has very little to do with, how I feel about myself.” All items were measured with a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much so). In total there were nine stereotype threat questions.

For the purpose of this study having a high or low mean score across the nine items on the self-categorization scale determines if a participant is a high or low identifier with their race. This distinction was set for the analysis of hypotheses 2 a and b. Participants were asked self-categorization questions before viewing the Twitter Newsfeed (Time 1) and again after the stereotype threat questions (Time 2). Scale reliability for self-categorization was determined by obtaining the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the Black criminality and White criminality condition for both Time1 and Time 2. The Cronbach’s Alpha for the Black criminality condition was .758 for Time 1 and .773 for Time 2. The Cronbach’s Alpha for the White criminality condition was .807 for Time 1 and .812 for Time 2. The self-categorization instrument is available in Appendix B.

### *Intergroup Emotions*

Intergroup emotions were measured based on emotion items derived from Barksdale, Farrug, Harkness (2009) and Swim, Hyers, Cohen, Fitzgerald & Bylsma (2003). Both studies measured emotional responses to racism/prejudice. Barksdale et al. (2009) looks at perceived racial discrimination against Black Americans and their emotional responses to the racism. Participants were simply asked: “When I experience racism on the job, I generally feel. . . .”. Eight emotions were rated on a likert scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (Extremely).

The Swim et al. (2003) looks at the emotional responses of college students to everyday prejudice. In this study, prejudice was determined by daily diaries that students kept. Participants were asked to report “race-related” events that they experienced. They then rated these events on a scale from simply a discussion of prejudice to definitely a prejudicial event. Some of the prejudicial events that emerged through a grounded theory coding procedure were staring and bad service in public establishments. Once students thought about each incident they experienced, they were asked to indicate their emotional response to the event. Twenty-four emotions were assessed.

The emotions used in these studies are appropriate for measuring intergroup emotions in this study because the emotions one might experience when viewing a negative representation of one’s social group might mirror the emotions experienced when confronted with some form of prejudice/racism. From the 32 emotions used between the two studies, ten emotional responses were selected. These emotions include: Anger, frustration, upset, shame, sadness, strength, calmness, self-confidence, comfortable, and self-assurance. Three filler emotions were also added (awkward, happy, and fear). Participants rated the above intergroup emotions on a five-point Likert scale how much they felt each emotion, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much so). The inter-group emotions instrument is available in Appendix B.

### Criminality Stimuli

Participants in each racial prime condition were given two Twitter pages to read. Participants viewed five tweets – including text and an image – in each of the two message repetitions across all three conditions. For the racial criminality condition, three of these tweets



conveyed the criminality prime and two were tweets about non-crime news stories (e.g. unsafe road conditions, link to a news poll on measles outbreak). Each of the race criminality prime tweets varied by three characteristics that previous research suggests can uniquely contribute to evoking White or Black criminality, while racially “neutral” content was presented in the control condition. These criminality prime tweets varied by the type of image employed, the name of the alleged suspect, and the location that the crime takes place in. The process for selecting race prime eliciting images, suspect names, and locations are described below, followed by an explanation of the control/non-racial criminality prime stimuli. See the stimuli for all three condition in Appendix C.

### *Tweet Images*

The images used to elicit either a White or Black criminality prime did so by either showing all Blacks or all Whites in the Twitter image. The images contained either a Black or White mug shot. The second image contained a crowd of either all Whites or all Blacks interacting with a policeman. The last image contained either a Black or White man being arrested. The second Twitter page contained another set of mug shot, crowd, and arrest images.

All photos were pre-tested for racial ambiguity by a sample of ( $N = 27$ ) from an upper-division communication course. Participants were presented with sixteen images of mug shots and arrest photos. They were then asked if the individual in the photo was “Black/African American/African/Caribbean”, “White/European/Caucasian along with other racial categories. Only images where 60% or more of the participants selected as Black or White were used.

Examples of the images selected can be found in the photos used in the newsfeeds in Appendix C.

### *Tweet Text*

Each image was accompanied by a 140 character or less text that elicited either a Black or White racial criminality prime based on the name of the alleged suspect, the location that the crime takes place in, and type of crime described. Stereotypical Black or White names were used in each tweet. Names were chosen from Bertrand and Mullainathan (2003) which looks at racial discrimination in the labor market. In order to create stereotypical White and Black names for the study resumes, researchers looked at birth certificates of babies born in Massachusetts between 1974 and 1979. They then sorted this information by race and used the most frequent names of each racial group. An example of each is Jamal Robinson (Black name) and Greg McCarthy (White name).

The location of the university where this study takes place has a very high in-state student body. The manipulation check for this study found that 88.7% of participants lived in Florida for 6 years or more (Appendix A). For this reason, highly Black or highly White populated neighborhoods in the area are mentioned in each text to further strengthen the racial prime. Highly populated neighborhoods were defined as areas containing 70% or more persons of the specified racial group. The highly populated Black areas used for the study are: Pine Hills, Parramore, Oak Ridge, Tangelo Park, Eaton Ville, and Orange Blossom trail. The highly populated White areas used were: Dr. Phillips, Winter Park, Lake Mary, Altamonte Springs,

Clermont, and Bithlo (“Population of Cities in Florida: Census 2010 and 2000 Interactive Maps, Statistics, Demographics – CensusViewer”).

Racially stereotyped crimes were chosen from previous studies (Jones & Kaplan, 2003; Sunnafrank & Fontes, 1983; Gordon, Bindrim, McNicholos & Walden, 2001). Jones and Kaplan (2003) developed stereotypically Black and White crimes by having study participants rate to what degree a crime was associated with Whites or Blacks. Sunnafrank and Fontes (1983) developed stereotyped crimes through a similar process. Gordon et al. (2001) posits that Blacks are more likely associated with blue collar crimes while Whites are more likely associated with white collar crimes. Based on the findings of these studies, 14 crimes were pretested.

All crimes were pre-tested for by a sample of (N = 27) from an upper-division communication course. Six stereotypically Black crimes were chosen for both the White and Black conditions. Crimes that a higher percentage of participants reported as being stereotypically Black as compared to stereotypically White were chosen for the study. All the crimes used were “stereotypically Black” because Blacks were the focus of the study and because using consist crimes facilitated comparison among conditions. The crimes used were muggings, drug possession with the intent to distribute, theft, gang-activity, grand- theft auto, and robbery. See results of selected crimes in Appendix A.

#### Control Condition

The control Twitter pages did not denote race, but did display negative news stories in order to mirror the valence of the criminality primes. The first control Twitter page displayed a silhouette mug shot of a man convicted of a racially neutral crime (i.e., vehicular manslaughter),

a story about a storm, and a story about an apartment fire. The second Twitter page displayed stories about a drop in school district standardized testing scores, building collapse and highway car crash.

### Procedure

Participants were given a link to the online study hosted by Qualtrics. They were told that they would be presented with the Twitter page from a new news source coming to the Central Florida area: Central Florida News and that they will be asked questions about the newsfeeds. It was further explained that the purpose of the study was to get a better understanding of millennial use of Twitter as a news source. Participants were first asked to indicate their race. Options for the race question were: White (non-Hispanic), Black or African American, American Indian, Asian, Native-American, Hispanic, and other. Black participants were either randomly assigned to the Black criminality condition or the control group. White participants were also randomly assigned to either the White criminality condition or the control group. As stated earlier, participants that indicated anything other than “Black” or “White” for the race question viewed the Black Twitter newsfeeds and answered demographic questions.

After being assigned to a condition, *all* participants completed the self-categorization measure before viewing the stimuli (Time 1). Participants were then presented with two newsfeeds. Both newsfeeds had a timer of 15 seconds on them before participants could move on to the next question. This was done to help ensure that they carefully read the Twitter newsfeeds. After viewing the Twitter newsfeeds, they responded to the criminality stigmatization scale. Again, this scale was used to make participants self-reflect on their linkage to the

stigma/stereotype of their social group engaging in crime; therefore, inducing the phenomenon of stereotype threat. This measure was not used in the analysis, however, results from the measure can be found in appendix A. After responding to the stigmatization scale, participants were asked self-categorization items a second time (Time 2). They then indicated their emotional responses to the Twitter newsfeed and completed manipulation check and demographic items. See table one for condition assignment for Black and White participants as well as for the flow of survey questions for each condition.

Table 1: Condition Assignment Chart

	Black Criminality Condition	White Criminality Condition	Control Condition
Black Participants	Twitter Use ques. Race sort question SC ques. Time 1  <i>*Exposure to two Black Criminality newsfeeds*</i>  SC ques. Time 2 Stereotype Threat ques. Intergroup Emotions ques. Manipulation check ques.		Twitter Use ques. Race sort question SC ques. Time 1  <i>*Exposure to two control condition newsfeeds*</i>  SC ques. Time 2 Stereotype Threat ques. Intergroup Emotions ques. Manipulation check ques.
White Participants		Twitter Use ques. Race sort question SC ques. Time 1  <i>*Exposure to two White Criminality newsfeeds*</i>  SC ques. Time 2 Stereotype Threat ques. Intergroup Emotions ques. Manipulation check ques.	Twitter Use ques. Race sort question SC ques. Time 1  <i>*Exposure to two control condition newsfeeds*</i>  SC ques. Time 2 Stereotype Threat ques. Intergroup Emotions ques. Manipulation check ques.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Prior to hypothesis testing, manipulation check analyses were performed to test for differences between conditions on multiple variables that may influence the dependent variables of interest. These included analyzing differences by condition in Twitter use, using Twitter as a news source, credibility of the newsfeeds presented and acquaintance with someone who has committed a crime.

Multiple analysis of variance tests were performed comparing the average Twitter use for Black, White, and control group participants. Frequency of Twitter use significantly differed by condition,  $F(2,366) = 8.29, p < .001$ , such that participants in the Black criminality condition reported greater Twitter use than those in the White criminality condition. There was no statistically significant difference in frequency of Twitter use between the Black criminality condition and the control condition ( $p = .056$ ). There was also no statistically significant difference between the White criminality condition and the control condition ( $p = .115$ ). Therefore, the Black criminality condition reported using Twitter more frequently than the White criminality condition and both conditions did not differ in Twitter use from the control.

Multiple analysis of variance tests were performed comparing the average use of Twitter as a news source between the conditions. Using Twitter as a news source significantly differed by condition,  $F(2,366) = 9.17, p < .001$ , such that participants in the Black criminality condition reported greater use of Twitter as a news source than those in the White criminality condition. Participants in the Black criminality condition also reported greater use of Twitter as a news source than those in the control condition. There was no statistically significant difference in using Twitter as a news source between the White criminality condition and the control condition

( $p = .669$ ). Therefore, Blacks reported using Twitter as a news source more than the White criminality and the control conditions. There was no difference in using Twitter as a news source between the control and the White criminality condition.

Multiple analysis of variance tests were performed comparing newsfeed credibility for Black, White, and control group participants. Newsfeed credibility differed by condition,  $F(2,366) = 7.96, p < .001$ , such that participants in the Black criminality condition reported that the newsfeed was less credible than the White criminality condition and the control condition. There was no statistically significant difference in newsfeed credibility between the White criminality condition and the control condition ( $p = .184$ ). See Table two for ANOVA results. A chi square test were performed to analyze differences in acquaintance with someone who has convicted across the conditions. No significant interaction was found among the conditions ( $\chi^2(2) = 2.99, p = .224$ ).

Table 2: Manipulation Check Anova Results

	Black Condition (1)		White Condition (2)		Control Condition (3)		$F(2,366)$	Tukey's HSD	p	$\eta^2$
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD				
Frequency of Twitter Use	5.09	2.35	4.23	2.37	4.80	2.48	8.29	2<1 3, 1 3, 2	.000*	0.0043
Twitter as a News source	4.83	1.62	3.97	1.48	4.15	1.67	9.17	2<1 3<1 3, 2	.000*	0.0477
Newsfeed Credibility	2.52	.93	3.03	1.06	2.81	.91	7.96	2<1 3<1 3, 2	.000*	0.0416

After analyzing the manipulation check questions, the studies research questions and hypotheses were tested. Research Question 1 asked how viewing same-race criminality primes affects self-categorization for those in the Black and White criminality prime conditions. (See

Table 1). Four paired samples t-test were conducted to compare the self-categorization means of the Black and White criminality condition, at Times 1 and 2, respectively. The third and fourth paired samples T-test were conducted on the control group as an additional analysis. These tests compared the self-categorization means of Black and White control participants, at Times 1 and 2, respectively. The first t-test compared Black self-categorization before viewing the Black criminality prime (Time 1) and after exposure to the Black criminality prime (Time 2). The test revealed a small, but statistically significant difference,  $t(115) = 2.50, p < .05$ , such that those in the Black criminality condition reported a decrease in self-categorization Time 2 ( $M = 4.07, SD = .55$ ) as compared to self-categorization at Time 1 ( $M = 4.13, SD = .56$ ).

The second paired samples T-test compared self-categorization means of the White criminality condition before viewing the White criminality prime (Time 1) and after viewing the White criminality prime (Time 2). The test revealed a statistical difference,  $t(109) = 4.35, p < .001$ , such that those in the White criminality condition also reported a decrease in self-categorization with being White at Time 2 ( $M = 3.25, SD = .55$ ) as compared to self-categorization with being White at Time 1 ( $M = 3.38, SD = .59$ ). In response to RQ1, both those in the Black criminality prime condition and White criminality prime condition reported lower levels of self-categorization with their race after viewing same-race criminality messages.

The third and fourth paired samples T-test compared Time 1 and Time 2 self-categorization for Black and White participants in the control condition. There was no statistically significant difference in t-test for Black participants in the control condition in self-categorization from Time 1 to Time 2 ( $p = .489$ ). There was also no statistically significant difference in t-test for Black participants in the control condition in self-categorization from



Time 1 to Time 2 ( $p = .095$ ). As a whole the control condition results show that there was no statistically significant change in Time 1 and Time 2 self-categorization for Black and White participants who were exposed to negative news stories. Therefore, these results suggest that it could be the exposure to the prime of Blacks and Whites as criminals that lead to the statistically significant decrease in self-categorization for those in the criminality prime conditions. The weight of these results will be discussed at length in the discussion section.

Table 3: Self-Categorization at Time 1 and Time Two

Self-Categorization	Time 1		Time 2		n	t	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
Black Criminality Condition	4.13	.56	4.07	.55	116	2.50	.014*
White Criminality Condition	3.38	.59	3.25	.55	110	4.35	.000*
Black Control Condition	4.08	.59	4.06	.58	57	.697	.489
White Control Condition	3.36	.65	3.31	.61	86	1.68	.095

Research Question 2 asked how viewing same-race criminality primes affects group-level emotional responses across conditions. Multiple analysis of variance tests were performed comparing the mean emotional responses of Black, White, and control group participants. Post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD were performed to analyze which conditions differed. Eight of the thirteen emotions yielded significant results. Refer to Table 2 for mean differences for each emotion by condition.

Self-reported anger significantly differed by condition,  $F(2,366) = 22.58$ ,  $p < .001$ , such that participants in the Black criminality condition reported greater anger than those in the White criminality condition and in the control condition. There was no statistically significant difference in self-reported anger between the White criminality condition and the control condition ( $p = .692$ ). The same pattern – of the Black criminality prime condition reporting

greater emotional responses than both the White criminality prime condition and control condition (and no significant difference between the White criminality prime condition and control condition) was also found in responses to feeling upset,  $F(2,366) = 24.80, p <.001$ , sad,  $F(2,366) = 12.22, p <.001$ , frustrated,  $F(2,366) = 49.48, p <.001$  and shame  $F(2,366) = 9.44, p <.001$ .

Conversely, self-reports of feeling calm significantly differed by condition,  $F(2,366) = 3.72, p <.05$ , such that participants in the Black criminality condition reported feeling *less* calm than those in the White criminality condition. There was no statistically significant difference in feeling calm between the Black criminality condition and the control condition ( $p = .163$ ) nor between the White Criminality condition and the control condition ( $p = .567$ ). Self-reports of feeling comfortable significantly differed by condition, as well  $F(2,366) = 19.46, p <.001$ , such that participants in the Black criminality condition reported feeling less calm than those in the White criminality condition. Again, there was no statistically significant difference in self-reported anger between the White criminality condition and the control ( $p = .783$ ). There was no statistically significant difference in self-reports for feeling self-assured, self-confident or strengthened.

One of the three filler emotions which were happy, fear and awkward had statistically significant results. Self-reports of feeling happy significantly differed by condition,  $F(2,366) = 27.00, p <.001$ , such that participants in the Black criminality condition reported feeling less happy than those in the White criminality condition and in the control condition. There was no statistically significant difference of feeling happy between the White criminality condition and the control condition ( $p = .805$ ). As a whole, research question two finds that the Black

criminality condition reported higher feelings of all the negative emotions as compared to the White criminality condition and the control. On the contrary, the Black criminality condition reported feeling nearly every neutral and positive emotion to a lesser degree than the White criminality condition and the control condition. For nearly every emotion, there were no significant differences between the control and White criminality prime conditions.

Table 4: Emotional Responses by Condition

Emotional Responses	Black Condition (1)		White Condition (2)		Control Condition(3)		<i>F</i> (2,366)	Tukey's HSD	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>				
Anger	2.81	1.09	2.10	1.02	.99	.982	22.58	2<1 3<1 3, 2	.000** .000* .692	0.109
Calm	2.73	1.24	3.12	.98	2.98	1.010	3.72	2<1 3, 1 3, 2	.021* .163 .567	0.019
Comfortable	2.05	1.21	2.75	1.06	2.85	.981	19.46	2<1 3<1 3, 2	.000** .000** .783	0.096
Strengthened	2.03	1.20	1.90	.95	2.10	1.060	1.13	2, 1 3, 1 3, 2	.143 .135 .137	0.000
Fear	2.09	1.13	2.00	.98	2.06	1.063	.23	2, 1 3, 1 3, 2	.781 .969 .887	0.001
Shame	2.39	1.25	1.89	.99	1.85	.966	9.44	2<1 3<1 3, 2	.002* .000** .942	0.049
Frustration	3.37	1.32	2.11	.99	2.06	1.115	49.48	2<1 3<1 3, 2	.000** .000** .947	0.212
Happy	1.38	.83	2.21	.98	2.13	1.029	27.00	2<1 3<1 3, 2	.000** .000** .805	0.128
Self-Confident	2.47	1.36	2.52	1.08	2.45	1.086	.099	2, 1 3, 1 3, 2	.940 .997 .905	0.000
Upset	2.96	1.24	2.05	.96	2.13	1.050	24.80	2<1 3<1 3, 2	.000** .000** .838	0.119
Sad	2.84	1.21	2.16	1.04	2.29	1.098	12.22	2<1 3<1 3, 2	.000** .000** .662	0.06
Awkward	2.02	1.19	1.87	1.02	1.83	1.009	1.072	2, 1 3, 1 3, 2	.571 .326 .935	0.005
Self-Assured	2.26	1.23	2.41	1.02	2.34	1.068	.520	2, 1 3, 1 3, 2	.565 .844 .861	0.000

Hypothesis one predicted that the Black criminality condition and the White criminality condition would differ in Time 1 self-categorization (See Table 3). An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the self-categorization means of the Black and White criminality prime conditions at Time 1. The independent samples t-test revealed a statistical difference,  $t(224) = 9.73, p < .001$ , such that those in the Black participant condition reported a higher level of self-categorization with being Black ( $M = 4.13, SD = .56$ ) than the White participant condition did with being White ( $M = 3.38, SD = .59$ ). Hypothesis one was supported: There was a difference in self-categorization among Black participants in the Black Criminality Prime condition as compared to White participants in the White Criminality Prime condition at Time 1, such that there was higher self-categorization in the Black criminality prime condition as compared to the White criminality condition.

Table 5: Self-Categorization Differences at Time 1

Self-Categorization	Time 1		n	t	df	p
	M	SD				
Black Condition	4.13	.56	116	9.73	224	.000*
White Condition	3.38	.59	110			

Hypothesis 2a predicted that self-categorization as Black or White at Time 1 would affect Time 2 self-categorization. A median split of Time 1 mean racial self-categorization was performed to categorize those high or low in self-categorization before viewing the newsfeeds (see appendix A). For the purpose of this study, having a high or low mean score across the nine items on the self-categorization scale determines if a participant is a high or low identifier with their race. Two paired samples t-test were performed comparing the differences in self-

categorization at Time 1 and at Time 2 between those high and low in self-categorization in the Black criminality prime condition and those in the White criminality prime condition at Time 1 and at Time 2. The paired samples t-test performed on the Black criminality prime condition revealed a statistical difference,  $t(64) = 2.50, p < .05$ , such that those who highly identified with being Black at Time 1 ( $M = 4.52, SD = .21$ ) reported a decrease in identification with being Black at Time 2 ( $M = 4.43, SD = .27$ ). There was no significant change in identification for low identifiers ( $p = .606$ ).

Table 6: SC Differences by Degree of Identification (Black Condition)

Self-Categorization	Time 1		Time 2		n	t	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
Black High Identifiers	4.52	.21	4.43	.27	65	2.50	.004*
Black Low Identifiers	3.63	.45	3.61	.47	51	.519	.606

The paired samples t-test performed on the White condition revealed a statistical difference,  $t(57) = 5.96, p < .001$ , such that those who highly identified with being White at Time 1 ( $M = 3.83, SD = .37$ ) also reported a decrease in identification with being White at Time 2 ( $M = 3.59, SD = .45$ ). There was no significant change in identification for low identifiers ( $p = .826$ ). Hypothesis 2a was supported: The degree of identification at Time 1 influenced identification, or self-categorization, at Time 2 for both conditions. Highly identifying Blacks reported lowered levels of identification post exposure to same-race criminality primes and stereotype threat measures. Highly identifying Whites also reported greater levels of identification post exposure to same-race criminality primes and stereotype threat measures. Low identifiers of both races did not significantly differ in self-categorization between Times 1 and 2.

Table 7: SC Differences by Degree of Identification (White Condition)

Self-Categorization	Time 1		Time 2		n	t	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
White High Identifiers	3.83	.37	3.59	.45	58	5.96	.000*
White Low Identifiers	2.88	.36	2.88	.39	52	.222	.826

Hypothesis 2b predicted that Black and White high and low identifiers at Time 2 will experience differences in emotional responses post exposure to same-race criminality primes. A median split of the Time 2 mean racial self-categorization was performed to categorize those high and low in self-categorization. An independent samples t-test was performed comparing emotional responses between high and low identifiers in the Black criminality condition as well as on high and low identifiers in the White criminality condition.

Four of the thirteen emotions resulted in significant differences between high and low Black identifiers. Self-reports of anger significantly differed by identification,  $t(114) = -2.44, p < .05$ , such that high identifiers with being Black reported feeling more angry ( $M = 3.01, SD = 1.10$ ) than low identifiers ( $M = 2.52, SD = 1.03$ ). Feeling comfortable was marginally significantly.  $t(114) = 1.97, p < .05$ , such that high identifiers with being Black reported feeling less comfortable ( $M = 1.87, SD = 1.14$ ) than low identifiers ( $M = 2.31, SD = 1.27$ ). Self-reports of frustration significantly differed by identification,  $t(114) = -3.05, p < .05$ , such that high identifiers with being Black reported feeling more frustrated ( $M = 3.68, SD = 1.24$ ) than low identifiers ( $M = 2.94, SD = 1.34$ ). Reported feelings of self-confidence significantly differed by identification,  $t(114) = -2.756, p < .05$ , such that high identifiers with being Black reported feeling more self-confident ( $M = 2.75, SD = 1.49$ ) than low identifiers ( $M = 2.06, SD = 1.04$ ).

Table 8: Emotional Response Differences by Degree of Identification (Black Condition)

Emotional Responses	High Identifiers		Low Identifiers		n	t	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
Anger	3.01	1.10	2.52	1.03	68, 48	-2.44	.016*
Calm	2.65	1.25	2.85	1.22	68, 48	.88	.378
Comfortable	1.87	1.14	2.31	1.27	68, 48	1.96	.052
Strengthened	2.07	1.25	1.98	1.13	68, 48	-.41	.679
Fear	2.10	1.24	2.08	.964	68, 48	-.09	.927
Shame	2.41	1.27	2.35	1.24	68, 48	-.24	.809
Frustration	3.68	1.24	2.94	1.34	68, 48	-3.05	.003**
Happy	1.37	.82	1.40	.84	68, 48	.17	.858
Self-confident	2.75	1.49	2.06	1.04	68, 48	-2.75	.007**
Upset	3.13	1.22	2.71	1.23	68, 48	-1.83	.069
Sad	2.84	1.22	2.85	1.20	68, 48	.06	.945
Awkward	2.07	1.23	1.94	1.13	68, 48	-.60	.548
Self-Assured	2.37	1.31	2.10	1.09	68, 48	-1.13	.253

Two of the thirteen emotions yielded significant results for high and low identifiers with being White. Self-reported self-confidence significantly differed by identification,  $t(108) = -2.34$ ,  $p < .05$ , such that high identifiers with being White reported feeling more self-confident ( $M = 2.72$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ) than low identifiers ( $M = 2.24$ ,  $SD = .97$ ). Self-reports of feeling self-assured significantly differed by identification,  $t(108) = -2.47$ ,  $p < .05$ , such that high identifiers with being White reported feeling more self-assured ( $M = 2.61$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ) than low identifiers ( $M = 2.13$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ). This hypothesis was partially supported. Less than half of the emotional responses resulted in a statistically significant differences between high and low Black identifiers and between high and low White identifiers. High identifying Blacks reported feeling angrier, more frustrated, more self-confident, and less comfortable than low identifying Blacks, while high identifying Whites reported feeling more self-confident and more self-assured than low identifying Whites.



Table 9: Emotional Response Differences by Degree of Identification (White Condition)

Emotional Responses	High Identifiers		Low Identifiers		n	t	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
Anger	2.20	.97	1.96	1.07	64, 46	-1.25	.214
Calm	3.11	1.04	3.13	.90	64, 46	.11	.912
Comfortable	2.78	1.076	2.72	1.06	64, 46	-.30	.759
Strengthened	1.91	.95	1.89	.97	64, 46	-.08	.936
Fear	2.11	1.01	1.85	.94	64, 46	-1.37	.171
Shame	1.97	1.03	1.78	.94	64, 46	-.96	.337
Frustration	2.22	1.00	1.96	.98	64, 46	1.36	.175
Happy	2.27	.99	2.13	.98	64, 46	-.70	.481
Self-confident	2.72	1.20	2.24	.97	64, 46	-2.34	.021*
Upset	2.14	.99	1.93	.92	64, 46	-1.10	.272
Sad	2.28	1.06	2.00	1.01	64, 46	-1.39	.165
Awkward	2.00	1.06	1.70	.94	64, 46	-1.54	.125
Self-Assured	2.61	1.00	2.13	1.00	64, 46	-2.47	.015*

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

This study examined how the image of Black criminality in the media affects the identity and emotions of Blacks. It also examined how the image of White criminality affects the identity and emotions of Whites as a point of comparison. These effects were studied through the lens of self-categorization theory and inter-group emotions theory. Results show that the depiction of an individual's racial group as criminals does affect self-categorization with his or her race and his or her emotions. It also provides support that the effects of these images vary by race and level of identification with one's race.

This study also analyzed the differences in Twitter use and acquaintance with someone who has committed across conditions. It finds that the Black criminality condition reported more frequent use of Twitter and more use of Twitter as a news source than the White criminality and control condition. The Black criminality condition also reported finding the Twitter newsfeed less credible than the White criminality and control conditions. Because the Black criminality condition reported using Twitter more frequently than the other conditions, perhaps they were more discerning when viewing the newsfeed. Lastly this study analyzed if the conditions varied in acquaintance with someone who has committed a crime. Based on the literature review, it was suggested first-hand experience could mediate the effects of media images on individuals (Himmelweit, Oppenheim, & Vince, 1958). The study's analysis found no statistically significant differences between the conditions. Therefore, across the conditions personal exposure to crime was somewhat the same across conditions.

Research question one asked how viewing a same-race criminality prime affects self-categorization for those in the Black and White criminality prime conditions. The study finds that exposure to viewing a Black or White criminality prime in the form of an official news program's (Central Florida News) Twitter page results in a decrease in self-categorization as Black or White.

Individuals are motivated to maintain a positive evaluation of their social groups. As stated in the literature review, when confronted with a negative social identity, an individual may cope by "leaving" the group either physically or psychologically (Horsney, 2008). This phenomenon is apparent by the decrease in self-categorization by both Blacks and Whites. A point of comparison at the beginning of this study was how Whites will be affected by this prime of criminality. It was earlier suggested that because of their status in society, Whites may not be affected by such a prime. The results of this study find otherwise. Blacks and Whites both decrease in self-categorization post exposure to viewing their racial group as criminals. Blacks decrease in self-categorization by .06 while Whites decrease self-categorization by .13. Although it is a very small difference, results show that Whites actually decrease in self-categorization by a *very slight* larger margin than Blacks.

This is particularly interesting when considering the scale created for criminality stigmatization administered just before Time 2 self-categorization. Whites scored ( $M = 2.33$ ,  $SD = .54$ ) on this scale ranging from 1-5, while Blacks scored ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = .61$ ). This suggests that on average Whites rarely feel as though they are seen as deviants in society capable of committing a crime. Even after reporting this sentiment they still psychologically distanced

themselves from their race after viewing the stimuli. One possible explanation for the decrease is that Whites are simply less aware of their racial identity.

Hypothesis one is a testament to this assumption. Hypothesis one predicted that the Black criminality condition and the White criminality condition would differ in self-categorization at Time 1. This hypothesis was supported. Whites scored significantly lower than Blacks in self-categorization at Time 1. This suggests that the racial identity of “being White” is not central to the self-concept of Whites. Whites may have the proclivity to not view their racial group as central to their self-concept as the White Racial Identity Model postulates in the literature review. This could explain why those in the White criminality condition lowered their self-categorization to a slightly higher degree than Blacks. The findings of both research question one and hypothesis one may suggest that because Whites reported lower self-categorization, they are able to cope with a negative stereotype by psychologically distancing themselves from their racial group.

Similar to Whites in research question one, Blacks lowered their self-categorization with being Black at Time 2. It is also important to note that Blacks scored very high on the criminality stigmatization scale. Blacks scored an even 4.00 on a scale of 1-5. This suggests that Blacks believe that they are seen as deviants in society capable of committing crime. The effects of negative media images on the self-esteem and self-concept on Blacks have yielded mixed results. The literature review emphasized that Blacks may be less susceptible to adverse effects of negative media images because they may employ strategies that protect their self-esteem from the prejudice and denigration of others (Crocker & Major, 1989).

If it flows naturally that individuals are motivated to maintain a positive evaluation of their social groups, the decrease in self-categorization is a verification of that. Similar to Whites, Blacks lowered their self-categorization to psychologically “leave their group.” Although there was a decrease in self-categorization, Blacks on experienced a .06 decrease in self-categorization. This could be because the Black identity is central to the self-concept of Blacks as Demo & Hughes (1990) in the literature review.

According to Demo & Hughes (1990), researchers argue that strong racial identification places Blacks at risk for the adverse effects associated with Black stigmas. On the other hand, some propose that strong identification with being Black can be a protective factor against racism (Azibo, 1992). Consequently, the slight decrease in Black self-categorization suggests that the latter proposition could explain the results of research question one and hypothesis one. Blacks are initially high identifiers with their racial group. Even after exposure to their race represented as criminals and being asked to self-reflect on this stigma, Blacks did not experience a large decrease in self-categorization.

According to Rowe, Bennett and Atkinson (1994) racial identity development occurs in several stages that vary across models. They present these stages in four broad phases. The first being acceptance of dominant stereotypes of society. The second phase is one of dissonance where individuals question society’s stereotypes. The third phase is where the individual begins to integrate with their ethnic group and reject values outside their group. The last phase is where the individual retains a positive racial identity and accepts the positive traits of their racial group. Thus these stages may help explain why Blacks did not experience a larger decrease in self-categorization with their racial identity. Perhaps the strong affinity that Blacks have with their

racial group does act as a protective guard. Blacks acknowledge the stigma of criminality as found by their score in the criminality stigmatization scale, however, this does not cause them to experience a great decrease in self-categorization with their racial group.

Taken as a whole, research question one suggests that racial groups may experience a decrease in self-categorization with their race when primed with a negative image (criminality). The extent to which this decrease occurs varies by race. These findings emphasize that individuals strive to maintain a positive view of their racial group. They also suggest that psychological distancing from one's racial group is an option for coping with same-race primes of criminality.

It is important to note the difference between statistically significant and meaningful results as it related to self-categorization. As stated earlier, the control results suggest that it was primarily the exposure to the prime of Blacks and Whites as criminals that led to the decrease in self-categorization. Participants in the control group did not experience a statistically significant change in self-categorization which theoretically supports the previous claim; however, the control condition did experience a decrease in self-categorization. Participants in the control decreased self-categorization at Time 2 by .05 which is not far off from the .06 decrease in self-categorization by those in the Black criminality condition. Therefore, there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups, but the meaningful difference between the groups is much smaller. Because of this, drawing conclusions from the self-categorization results should be more speculative than absolute.

Research question two asked how viewing same-race criminality primes would influence group-level emotional responses across conditions. This study finds that those in the Black criminality condition reported feeling negative emotions to a greater degree than those in the White criminality and control conditions after viewing the newsfeeds. They reported greater anger, shame, frustration, sadness and feeling more upset. Conversely those in the Black criminality condition reported feeling nearly every positive emotion to a lesser degree than the White criminality condition and the control condition. Blacks felt less calm, comfortable, and happy after viewing twitter news stories featuring Black criminals. For nearly every emotion, there were no significant differences between the control and White criminality prime conditions. Therefore, there was no difference in emotional responses between Whites who saw their racial group portrayed as criminals and White and Black individuals who simply saw negative news stories. It is important to note that Whites experienced a decrease in self-categorization post exposure to the criminality crime; but no change in emotion as compared to a group who was not exposed to race at all.

Individuals who identify more strongly with a group should express group emotions to a greater extent than those who identify less strongly (Smith, Seger, and Mackie, 2007). Research question two finds that Blacks reported feeling more negative emotions. The reason for this could be two-fold. For one, Blacks reported higher self-categorization than Whites at Time 1. Perhaps having strong self-categorization with one's racial group can result in having a stronger negative emotional reaction to a racial criminality prime than someone with low self-categorization. This reaction could result in experiencing very high negative emotions and conversely a decrease in positive emotions as research question two results suggests.

Perhaps another explanation for these emotional responses is the status of Blacks in society compared to that of Whites. Matsumoto (1989) posits that although emotions are biologically engrained in individuals, learning to control the expression and perception of emotions is highly dependent on cultural factors. According to Wilkins (2012), if hardship produces anger then it makes sense for Blacks to be predisposed to anger as compared to Whites. According to the author, there is hierarchal nature of race in society. Because of this, Blacks are more likely than Whites to confront powerlessness and chronic stress that may generate anger (Chito Childs 2005; Thomas & Gonzalez-Prendes 2009). Therefore, Blacks may have reported greater negative emotions and less positive emotions based on their cultural standards for expressing emotions. On the other hand, the exposure to the criminality stereotype may have triggered thoughts of the stigma and the hardships they face in society. Because Whites do not face the same stigma and hardships, perhaps they do not have as strong of an emotional connection to the criminality prime.

Hypothesis 2a predicted that degree of identification with being Black or White at Time 1 affects Time 2 self-categorization. This study finds that high identifiers in both the Black and White criminality conditions experienced a decrease in Time 2 self-categorization while low identifiers in both conditions experienced no change. Similar to previous results, hypothesis 2a also tells us that high identifiers with their race will decrease racial identification after exposure to the criminality prime. Contrary to the earlier explanation, however, low identifiers are not affected by such a prime.

In light of the results of hypothesis 2a, perhaps it is not a lower racial identification that caused Whites to decrease self-categorization to a slightly higher degree than Blacks. Rather, it



may be the differences between the racial groups themselves. As mentioned in Matsumoto (1989), although emotions are biologically encoded, learning to control the expression and perception of emotions is *highly dependent on cultural factors*. Possibly the management of self-categorization post exposure to a criminality crime may vary by racial group. Future research should examine how racial groups differ in self-categorization and how self-categorization is affected by a racial criminality prime.

Hypothesis 2b predicted that degree of identification with being Black or White will affect emotional responses to same-race criminality stimuli. This study finds that this hypothesis was partially supported. Less than half of the emotions varied between high and low Black and White identifiers. Studies find that stronger negative emotions are more likely seen in high group identifiers than low group identifiers (Yzerbyt, Dumont, Wigboldus, and Gordijn, 2003; Gordijn, Yzerbyt, Wigboldus, & Dumont, 2006). The Black criminality condition was a testament to this. High identifiers reported experiencing more negative emotions (anger and frustration) than low identifiers and less neutral or positive emotions (calm and comfortable). High identifiers in the White criminality condition reported more positive emotions than low identifiers (self-confident and self-assured).

Again this difference between the emotions expressed by racial group could be due to cultural factors. However, it is interesting to note that high identifiers in both the Black and White criminality prime conditions expressed significantly higher self-confidence than low identifiers. This could suggest that a strong racial identification plays a role in self-perceived confidence. Taken as a whole, these findings help deepen our knowledge of racial self-categorization and how it is affected by a negative image (specifically criminality). It also gives

insight on how emotions are affected by the prime of criminality and how these emotions vary by level of identification.

### Practical Implications

77% of the study sample reported that they have a Twitter account. And 49.8% of these users reported that they use Twitter as a news source on a weekly to daily basis. Twitter is emerging as a go-to platform for current and even breaking news. For example, news of Osama Bin Laden's death in May of 2011 first broke via Twitter. Not only do individuals turn to Twitter for current news, but so do traditional news platforms. In the same year Twitter played a major role in the Arab Spring Uprising. Countries such as Egypt and Tunisia did not have well organized mainstream media outlets for citizens to follow the crisis. Therefore, several news organizations turned to Twitter to acquire information of the events through on-the ground news sources (Lotan et al., 2011).

In a study by Moon & Hadley (2014), researchers analyze how major news sources use Twitter as a news source. They looked at seven major news outlets in the United States and found that a total of 946 newspaper stories and TV news segments used Twitter as a news source between 2010 and 2011. The top three outlets that cited Twitter as a news source were CNN (389) The New York Times (238 stories) and The Washington Post (113). Consequently not only does Twitter disseminate news acquired from major news outlets but it also informs these outlets. In this way, Twitter has become a major player in *co-creating* information.

Research shows that "crime news" is a topic that mainstream news organizations have turned to Twitter for as a news source (Moon & Hadley 2014). Both crime news and race have

been a focal point of the Twitter conversation of late. Tweets that contain the hashtags such as #iCantBreathe and #BlackLivesMatter have proliferated the Twitter world. A sample tweet to exemplify this is: “So angry, #iCantBreathe. So disappointed, #iCantBreathe. So frustrated, #iCantBreathe. But motivated to make sure #ThisEndsNow” (Chan, 2014). These tweets were posted to spread news stories, spark discussion, and protest how police wrongfully treat young Black Americans.

Conversely the hashtag #CrimingWhileWhite became Twitter's highest trending topic in the United States recently (Chan, 2014). This hashtag speaks to how being White slackens the consequences of committing a crime and facilitates interactions with law enforcement. A sample tweet with this hashtag is: “Tonight, Black protester & I both ignore barricade & walk in street. 4 cops pounce on him; I'm told to get in the pen. #CrimingWhileWhite” (Chan, 2014).

This study offers insight because it tackles just how crime news and race interact on Twitter in a way that has not been studied previously. The study's findings uncover that the interaction between both images of race and the 140 characters on Twitter are enough to create a stereotype priming effect on individuals. It also finds that this interaction can affect the identity and emotions of Blacks and Whites differently. These findings are especially important as Twitter grows as a news source for co-creating news and providing a platform for individuals to discuss race and crime. Later, directions for practical future research in light of these findings will be discussed.

## Limitations

The current study has some limitations as it relates to participants and stimuli. First, a college student sample was used which is not representative to truly extrapolate results to a more general population. Also, students were recruited from Black organizations which made up a large part of the Blacks in the Black criminality condition and the control condition. Research finds that those in multicultural school organizations find a sense of cultural connection and Black identity expression through membership in these organizations (Guiffrida, 2003; Harper & Quaye, 2007). Therefore, participants recruited from these organizations may have stronger self-categorization with their race than the average Black participant.

Secondly, this study omitted the responses of participants who did not indicate “Black/African American/African/Caribbean” or “White/European/Caucasian” as their race. Doing this leaves very little variability and may reduce the complexity of racial self-categorization. A more nuanced examination of different race portrayals could benefit this research. Measures were in place to help ensure participants attended to the newsfeeds. For example, participants were told at the beginning of the study that they will be asked questions about the newsfeeds. Also, a fifteen second timer was placed on each newsfeed. All that being said, including a question asking participants if they noticed predominantly Black or White criminals in the newsfeeds could have helped strengthen the manipulation check. Conducting online experiments makes it difficult to account for participant behavior during the study. For example, we do not know if participants paid attention to the content we showed them; nor do we know if participants had a lag time between viewing the stimuli and completing study measures.

Lastly, another limitation of this study is the stimuli used. Twitter is a dynamic, constantly updated media platform. For the purpose of this study, however, we had to use screen clippings of the Twitter newsfeeds as opposed to having participants log into a twitter profile in real-time. Screen clippings of newsfeeds may take away from the authentic experience of viewing news stories in real time. The difference between using a Twitter screen clip versus viewing a real-time twitter newsfeed could affect the strength of the prime. Exploring how race and crime interact on other social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram etc. could add a wealth of knowledge and a point of comparison.

#### Future Research

Future research should examine how racial groups differ in self-categorization. On a theoretical level, it would also be interesting to compare the initial level of self-categorization that different racial groups report as well as if self-categorization changes post exposure to a criminality prime. Additionally, future research should explore other racial stereotypes/negative images. Blacks have been strongly associated with criminality in the media as the literature review discusses; however there are other stereotypes in which Blacks have been associated with that can be explored. Conversely, it would be interesting to see how positive media primes of Blacks can affect self-categorization and emotions.

This study finds that Twitter can act as a platform for inducing a racial criminality prime. As race and crime becomes a growing topic on Twitter, future studies should examine the effects of social campaigns such as #ICantBreathe or #CrimingWhileWhite to observe their effects on identity and emotions. Another suggestion for future research is to analyze how the source of

racial crime news can affect self-categorization and inter-group emotions. According to Ahmad (2010) features such as “retweet” and “hashtag,” on Twitter can work like a “broadcast” medium. Therefore, both recognized news organizations and regular individuals can enter the conversation about race and crime in America. It would be interesting to explore how the source of crime news will affect individuals.

Lastly, memes have become an integral part of the social media communication structure. According to Xie, Natsev, Kender, Hill, and Smith (2011) a meme is defined as a cultural unit (e.g., an idea, value, or pattern of behavior) that is passed from one person to another in social settings. A “visual meme” can be defined as a video or image that is continuously reposted by more than one author (Xie et al., 2011). According to Kumar (2015) “Memes coalesce and globalize threads of culture, conversations, and ideas that would otherwise remain grounded and locally contained” (p.234). In several instances these memes encapsulate certain racial stereotypes. Memes with titles such as #BlackGuysBeLike, #MexicansBeLike or #WhiteGirlsBeLike at times emphasize negative widely held beliefs about respective social groups. Crime is a topic that many #Blackguysbelike or the even more popular and more derogatory meme #Ni---sbelike tend to cover.

One of such memes features an ethnic man (supposedly Black) at the center of the meme with a grey hood and a toy gun. The meme reads: “Niggas be like give me yo money” (Appendix D). Though this meme may have been created for purely entertainment purposes it actually promulgates a racial stereotype linking Blacks to crime. The #Ni---sbelike hashtag has over 2 million posts on Instagram. Twitter also contains several #Ni---sbelike hashtag although an exact number is not listed. These types of memes use both text and images to prime racial stereotypes.

Because memes are used in social media as mainly an entertainment purposes it would be interesting to see if they also have an effect on self-categorization and the emotions of individuals.

This study provides a current look into self-categorization as it relates to racial identity. According to Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton and Smith (1997), racial identity has been associated with a number of important concepts including emotion (Doosje et al., 1998, Mackie, Smith, and Ray, 2008), self-esteem (Hughes & Demo, 1989; Ward, 2004; Rivadeneyra, Ward and Gordon (2007), and academic performance (Steele and Aronson, 1995; Spencer, Steele, Quinn, 1999). For this reason, racial identity is a phenomenon that we should strive to more fully understand and a concept that media educators and media creators should be mindful of when creating content. It is my hope that the findings of this study will inform future studies and also help emphasize just how powerful negative media images are in affecting racial identity.

## **APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**



## Gender

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Male	177	35.1
Female	327	64.9
Total	504	100.0

## Ethnicity

	Frequency	Percent
White/European/Caucasian	196	38.9
Chicano/Latino/Hispanic	80	15.9
Black/African American/African/Carribbean	173	34.3
Asian	16	3.2
Pacific Islander	1	.2
Middle Eastern	4	.8
Mixed	33	6.5
Other	1	.2

## Condition

	Frequency		Valid Percent
Black Condition	116		23.0
White Condition	110		21.8
Control Condition	143		28.3
	Black Participants	57	11.3
	White Participants	86	28.3
Other	135		26.7
Total	504		100

## Crimes

Selected Crimes	Stereotypically Black	Stereotypically White
Robbery	29.6	0.0
Grand Theft-Auto	33.3	18.5
Mugging	33.3	3.7
Theft	29.6	0.0
Gang-Related Activity	81.5	18.5
Drug posession with intent to distribute	33.3	3.7

## Median Splits

### Black Criminality Condition

Black Condition Median Splits			
	Median Range	Frequency	Valid Percent
Time 1			
High Identifiers	4.22-5	65	56.0
Low Identifiers	0-4.22	51	44.0
Time 2			
High Identifiers	3.33-5	58	58.6
Low Identifiers	3.33-5	53	41.4

### White Criminality Condition

WhiteCondition Median Splits			
	Median Range	Frequency	Valid Percent
Time 1			
High Identifiers	4.11-5	68	52.7
Low Identifiers	0-4.11	48	47.3
Time 2			
High Identifiers	3.22-5	64	58.2
Low Identifiers	3.22-5	36	41.8

## Manipulation Check

### Years lived in Florida

	Frequency	Valid Percent
0-1 Years	21	4.2
2-5 Years	36	7.1
6 or more years	447	88.7

## Scale Reliability

### Self-Categorization Scale Reliability

#### Black Criminality Condition

	N of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Time 1	9	.758
Time 2	9	.773

#### White Criminality Condition

	N of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Time 1	9	.807
Time 2	9	.812

#### Stereotype Threat Scale Reliability

N of items	Cronbach's Alpha
9	.923

## Additional Results

### Self-Categorization for Control Condition

Self-Categorization	Time 1		Time 2		n	t	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
Black control condition	4.08	.59	4.06	.58	57	.697	.489
White control condition	3.36	.65	3.31	.61	86	1.68	.095

### Stereotype Threat Results (Mean Score by condition)

	M	SD
Black Criminality Condition	4.00	.54
White Criminality Condition	2.33	.61

## **APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

**Do you have a Twitter account?**

Yes

No

**How often do you use Twitter?**

Never

Less than once a month

2-3 times a month

Once a week

2-3 times a week

Daily

**How often do you use Twitter as a news source (New source- A platform place to get information on current events and local news?)**

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

Always

**Which option best describes your ethnicity/race?**

1) White/European/Caucasian

2) Chicano/Latino/Hispanic

3) Black/African American/African

4) Asian

5) Pacific Islander

6) Native American

7) Middle Eastern

8) Mixed

9) Other

**Self-Categorizations Scale Time 1**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements:**

I see myself as Black/White

(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

I am pleased to be Black/White

(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

I find strong ties with being Black/White

(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

I identify with other Blacks/Whites

(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

In general, being Black/White is an important part of my self-image

(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

I consider my being Black/White central to my life

(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

I have a strong attachment to other Black/White people

(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

At times, being Black/White guides how I view the world around me

(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

**Prime is shown**

Black Newsfeeds or White Newsfeeds or Control Newsfeeds (See Appendix C)

**Criminality Stigmatization Scale**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements:**

- I'm viewed negatively by mainstream society  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- Society views my racial group as dangerous  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- Members of mainstream society want to be my friends  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I do not feel victimized by society  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I feel that society holds a negative attitude toward me  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I feel as though society sees someone that looks like me as a potential criminal  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- Society discriminates against me.  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I feel that I am consistently judged by society on the basis of things other than my abilities or personality.  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I think society views the racial group that I belong to as capable of committing a crime.  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

**Self-Categorizations Scale Time 2**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements:**

- I see myself as Black/White  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I am pleased to be Black/White  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I find strong ties with being Black/White  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I identify with other Blacks/Whites  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- In general, being Black/White is an important part of my self-image  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I consider my being Black/White central to my life  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- I have a strong attachment to other Black/White people  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)
- Overall, being Black/White has very little to do with, how I feel about myself  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

"At times, being Black guides how I view the world around me"  
(Strongly Disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (Strongly Agree)

**Intergroup Emotions Questions**

**After viewing the above Twitter Newsfeed, to what extent do you feel the following emotions?**

Anger						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Calm						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Comfortable						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Strengthened						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Fear						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Shame						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Frustration						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Happy						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Self-confident						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Awkward						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Self-assured						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Upset						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)
Sad						
(Not at all)	1	2	3	4	5	(Extremely)

**Manipulation Check**

How long have you lived in Florida?

0-1 years

2-5years

6 or more years

Do you personally know anyone convicted of a crime?

Yes

No

How credible did you find the newsfeeds presented?

(Not at all credible 1 2 3 4 5 6 7(Extremely Credible)

Next, please choose the best answer about yourself in the following items:



**Demographics**

[Age] I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

[Gender] I am Male    Female

[Year] I am a:

Freshman   Sophomore   Junior   Senior   Other

[Major] My major is: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX C: TWITTER NEWSFEED SAMPLES**

# Black Twitter Newsfeed

The image is a screenshot of a Twitter profile for 'Central Florida News' (@CfrFloridaNews). The profile header shows the account name, a verified checkmark, and statistics: 61.7K tweets, 2,098 following, 57.7K followers, 796 favorites, and 13 lists. The main content area displays a series of tweets. The first tweet, posted 'now', reports that Tyron Williams of Oak Ridge was arrested and charged with drug possession with intent to distribute, accompanied by a mugshot of a Black man. The second tweet, dated 'Apr 11', discusses a measles outbreak and a poll, with a link to a news article. The third tweet, also dated 'Apr 11', reports on the search for 24-year-old Jamal Washington, involved in a robbery at Tangelo Park, with a photo of a crowd. The fourth tweet, dated 'Apr 11', mentions unsafe road conditions on I-4 causing a car pile-up. The fifth tweet, posted 'now', reports that Kareem Jones of Parramore was charged with grand theft auto and seen being apprehended by police, with a photo of a police officer talking to a man. On the right side of the newsfeed, there is a 'Who to follow' section listing accounts like Newsweek, satirix, and Good Morning America.

# White Twitter Newsfeed


The image shows a screenshot of the Central Florida News Twitter profile. The profile header includes the name 'Central Florida News', the handle '@CfrFloridaNews', and statistics: 61.7K tweets, 2,098 following, 57.7K followers, 796 favorites, and 13 lists. The newsfeed contains several tweets from the account, each with a text description and a corresponding image. The first tweet reports on the arrest of Todd Walsh. The second tweet discusses a measles outbreak poll. The third tweet reports on a robbery in Clermont. The fourth tweet mentions a car-pile up on I-4. The fifth tweet reports on the grand theft auto charge of Geoffrey Sullivan.

**Central Florida News**  
@CfrFloridaNews

TWEETS 61.7K FOLLOWING 2,098 FOLLOWERS 57.7K FAVORITES 796 LISTS 13 Edit profile


Tweets Tweets & replies Photos & videos

**Central Florida News** @CfrFloridaNews · now  
Todd Walsh of Bithilo was arrested this afternoon. Walsh was charged with drug possession w/ intent to distribute




**Central Florida News** @CfrFloridaNews · Apr 11  
Strong opinions are evident in a new Central Florida News poll on the measles outbreak and vaccinations <http://CentralFloridaNews.ws/1v5Gr2>

**Central Florida News** @CfrFloridaNews · Apr 11  
Police are still in search of 24-year old Neil Murphy. Neil is involved in a robbery taking place in Clermont



**Central Florida News** @CfrFloridaNews · Apr 11  
Unsafe road conditions cited as reason for 5 car-pile up on I-4 this morning [bit.ly/1H2C7gk](http://bit.ly/1H2C7gk)

**Central Florida News** @CfrFloridaNews · Apr 11  
Geoffrey Sullivan of Altamont Springs is charged w/ grand theft auto. Sullivan is seen apprehended by police.



## Control Twitter Newsfeed

The image shows a screenshot of the Twitter profile for Central Florida News (@CtrFloridaNews). The profile header includes the account name, location (Orlando, FL), website (CentralFloridaNews.com), and a grid of 6,532 photos and videos. The statistics bar shows 61.7K tweets, 2,098 following, 57.7K followers, 796 favorites, and 13 lists. The newsfeed contains several tweets with accompanying images and text:

- Tweet 1:** "Highway car crash on I-495 this afternoon leaves 4 injured" (Apr 12). Includes a photo of a multi-car pile-up on a highway with emergency vehicles.
- Tweet 2:** "Strong opinions are evident in a new Central Florida News poll on the measles outbreak and vaccinations http://CentralFloridaNews.ws/1v5GR2" (Apr 11).
- Tweet 3:** "Building collapse downtown, injuring 4 and causing 1 death-cites faulty architecture as cause" (Apr 12). Includes a photo of a building's exterior with significant debris and structural damage.
- Tweet 4:** "Unsafe road conditions cited as reason for 5 car-pile up on I-4 this morning bit.ly/1H2C7gk" (Apr 11).
- Tweet 5:** "Police are still on the search for a 24-year-old man accused of first degree murder in the downtown area." (Apr 12). Includes a silhouette mugshot of a man.

On the right side of the newsfeed, there is a "Who to follow" section listing accounts like Newsweek, Sabrina (@TheTweetLanguage), and Good Morning America.

## **APPENDIX D: MEME EXAMPLE**



## **APPENDIX E: APPROVAL OF EXEMPT HUMAN RESEARCH**





University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research & Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

### Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To: Shantel Campbell

Date: May 12, 2015

Dear Researcher:

On 05/12/2015, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
Modification Type: Protocol revision; recruitment modification.  
Project Title: The Dark side of Stereotypes: The effects of negative media images on self-identity and emotions  
Investigator: Shantel Campbell  
IRB Number: SBE-15-11128  
Funding Agency:  
Grant Title:  
Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the [Investigator Manual](#).

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patria Davis".

Signature applied by Patria Davis on 05/12/2015 10:44:03 AM EDT

IRB Coordinator

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